



What's inside the newsletter?

Canteen Wish week

The most popular week for eating when the children choose the menu. Page 6



Plans to reform the school curriculum. The cost driven changes that the Board of Governors is trying to implement that will lower educational standards and result in a less valued BAC exam. All parents need to read this article. Page 4

Swedish section concert

On April 25 the Swedish primary children held their annual concert - which featured a surprise act that had the whole audience gasping and clapping. Page 6

Threat to the Anglophone

faculty. The UK is refusing to send more teachers or to extend existing contracts. this will dramatically impact the quality of teaching both in the Anglophone section and in L2. Find out why and what you can do to stop this. Page 2

Forced to urinate in the open in bus park.

School and RdB still have not implemented toilets in the bus parking - with dire consequences for small children. Page 2

School safety - is enough being done?

Parents were rightly concerned when it transpired that the school was not practicing regular fire drills, and was not well prepared for an evacuation.

Thank goodness the Gas Leak provided an opportunity to identify and fix the problems.

Three months on, are we making good progress towards a safe school environment?

The Secretary General of the school system, Kari Kivinen, has been personally engaged in helping the school to get back on its feet from the week of the gas leak. Luckily no child was injured during the evacuations, however, the lack of safety and security standards and procedures became clearly visible. He promptly arranged a meeting of the School Board to review the lessons learnt and chart a course for getting to a best practice safety environment in our school, and also all the European schools.

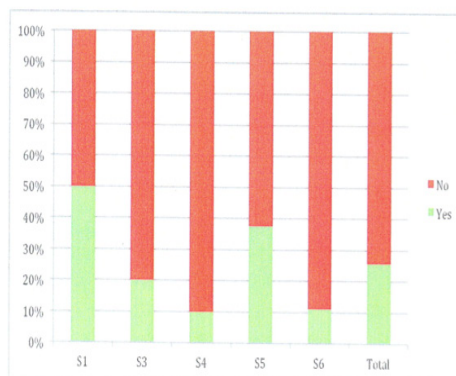
Key failings to be addressed include alarms that did not go off or were not heard, failure in Primary of the emergency intercom, teachers and pupils unclear what to do and where to go, no registers taken and all school communications channels going off line when the power was cut. Subsequently plans for distance learning had to be put together at short notice.

Since then a lot has been done. The school has rapidly implemented the common sense fixes. It has put in place a regular fire drill programme, with the first drill already completed. The school announced that two more fire drills will be undertaken this year, including one where there is no advanced warning. There will also be a test of fire evacuation from the canteen during lunchtime.

The APEEE will continue to put pressure on the school to fulfill its promises.

The school has also started to take action to address the shortage of fire exits in the primary building. This is an issue that both the school and the Belgian authorities have been aware of for some time, and has now been reconfirmed by the fire brigade in their report to the school.

Do you think the evacuation was well organised?



Results of survey conducted amongst the secondary pupils by the CdE.

35% of students could not hear the alarm properly and 28% took over 15 minutes to evacuate

There are insufficient exits given the number of pupils according to Belgian law.

The APEEE has been pressing the school for action on this and we are pleased that it is now being addressed. In the short term the school is moving out larger classes and at the same time pressuring the Belgian state to build external fire exits. Moving classes causes inconvenience, but we believe that safety and security must come first.

The Secretary General, with the Commission and the APEEE are demanding the Belgian authorities to get these exits built. In the best case construction of additional exits will take 2 years' time.

But given the weaknesses exposed by the gas leak in the school's safety arrangements, the school board also required the school to bring in external help, acknowledging that the school does not have the knowledge or experience needed to bring the school safety environment up to best practice.

School management, citing cost issues, have not yet hired any experts and nor have they started with the process of a comprehensive safety and security audit undertaken by external professionals, as was agreed with the school board.

This means that the school still does not have a qualified security officer in place, as required by law and nor does it have the expert help it was told to get. When this was revealed at the recent Health & Safety Working Group, teachers and parents were united in expressing their concerns. It is clear that the school management is under resourced in addressing these safety and security issues, but the solution is to get in the external help needed, not to delay or try to 'learn on the job'. The APEEE is therefore pressing the school hard to get on top of this and demanding action.

Overall we cannot award a pass mark to the school on this vital work. Progress is being made and good work is being done, but until we have a complete and professional review of all security arrangements we do not know whether all risks are understood and being addressed. However, given the importance that the Commission, the Secretary General and the APEEE on behalf of parents, place on addressing safety and security, we believe there is positive momentum in the right direction. We will keep parents fully informed.

- NEWS UPDATE-

Pawel Wojtczak and Javier Arnedo met class representatives on 6 May 2013 to provide an information update

Key comments expressed were:

- Why has nothing been done about the failure of the Primary building to meet fire safety standards since 2005?
- Is the Secondary building compliant with fire safety standards?
- Why has no external safety expertise been used so far?
- Please share with parents statistics on lost teaching hours.
- School communication must improve.
- Why have S6 been banned from the BAC Ball at the last minute?

Anglophone teacher shortage to become critical

Not all member states contribute equally to the costs of the European schools. The UK in particular claims that it should cost more than others because many SWALS join the Anglophone section - for which the UK provides teachers - but contribute very little to the costs of this.

The UK has tried to get agreement at the Board of Governors that member states who do not have their own sections should anyhow contribute financially to the cost of educating their pupils. But there is no agreement on this. The UK has therefore declared it will not send any more replacement teachers.

There are currently 20 UK seconded staff. By 2015 as little as 4 may be left due to retirements and teachers reaching the end of their contracts. They will need to be replaced by hourly paid teachers, recruited locally. Finding the necessary number of high calibre of senior teachers in the local market at the low wages rates the Commission offers will be very challenging. This is an issue that is affecting all European Schools.

We can expect that we will see more junior teachers and non native teachers being used. This will not only damage the education of Anglophone section students, but all students studying English as their L2.

The school and the APEEE are very concerned about this situation and monitoring it closely. The APEEE believes it is only solvable if the Secretary General's office is given the ability to recruit teachers directly on competitive wages and proper contracts.

BUS PARK UPDATE

When the bus park project was approved, certain items were removed from the specification by the Regie de Battiments. One such item was a toilet facility for the children. If the younger children are desperate for the loo, and there is time and available staff, they can be taken over to the school Preau, but this is not possible in many cases, which results in children urinating behind the buses.

The APEEE finds this to be completely unacceptable. The APEEE have proposed an inexpensive solution to the Belgian authorities, but their permission is needed and at present the issue moves forward with all the momentum of a slowly deflating balloon.

Communications with the Belgian authorities is always managed by the school rather than the APEEE. We will continue to work with the school in pressing the Belgian authorities to get moving on this. If any parents have contacts or suggestions that can facilitate this process please get in touch.

On other news, the bus park is working very well. There have not been any issues so far and nor have any complaints been received. The next step is to get a foot bridge built from the bus park into the school. The APEEE is working with the school on this issue. We remain delighted that this 14 year project has come to fruition, but hope we do not need to wait another 14 years for either a bridge or toilet facilities.

Site Internet: <http://www.woluweparents.org>

Pour toutes modifications, nouvelles inscriptions et informations plus générales pour la nouvelle année scolaire 2013/2014, veuillez visiter notre site internet <http://www.woluweparents.org> (section Transport).

Attention:

- La réinscription des élèves au service des transports pour la nouvelle année scolaire est automatique.
- Toutes les modifications ou annulations doivent être effectuées entre le 3 juin et le 28 juin 2013.
- Toutes les inscriptions ou modifications envoyées après le 28 juin 2013 ne pourront être prises en compte qu'en fonction des places disponibles.
- Toutes les nouvelles inscriptions pour l'année scolaire 2013/2014 seront traitées à partir du 3 juin et ce, jusqu'au 28 juin 2013 également. Ces inscriptions se feront exclusivement sur notre site internet [woluweparents.org](http://www.woluweparents.org) Plus de détails à venir sur notre site...

Demande ponctuelle d'invités:

Certains de nos bus sont COMPLETS. Toute modification ponctuelle ou temporaire doit être demandée au Bureau des Transports par e-mail, au plus tard la veille, et ne sera acceptée que s'il nous reste des places disponibles.

Le Bureau des Transports recherche toujours:

DES SURVEILLANTS ADULTES pour accompagner nos élèves dans les bus quittant l'école les mercredis à 13h00 et les autres jours à 15h30.

Veuillez nous contacter pour de plus amples informations:

Tél : 02/761.93.75-76 – transport@woluweparents.org

PEOPLE IN FOCUS: Karl Hasslof



A rookie in APEEE!

«Time flies when you're having fun». This can certainly be said about working for the APEEE. There are so many interesting, concerning, urgent and important questions to deal with. Just thinking of how many documents that have been read and pondered and how many issues there are to deal with, when I look back at this relatively short time I've been involved.

It has been said it takes up to a year to get a grip on these things and this is certainly true. It's great fun, though! Well, sitting in meetings a whole day, training gluteus maximus, is perhaps not the best part. Being involved and allowed to contribute to our children's education and well being is however.

Perhaps too little of what the APEEE does is noticed and sometimes we struggle with unclear and dubious legislation, but the will, knowledge and energy is there. I'm happy to be a part of this group of dedicated people, giving so much of their time and energy for this worthy cause.

I mentioned legislation as a cause for consternation but could also add what I feel is a bit of rigidity in the way this and many other schools are managed. APEEE already provides services as busing, the canteen and extra-curricular activities. The contribution could be even bigger, especially concerning pedagogical matters and it is concerning these I sense the rigidity. In my opinion, the management could find great support from parents via APEEE, more than today.

Being a teacher myself, I now expect to hear something along the lines of "leave the pedagogic and education to the professionals". To that I'd like to answer – well, there are pedagogues in APEEE, but also professionals with a wide range of knowledge of life after school. This is the world our children are headed to. There is almost unlimited experience to be shared, about requirements for the students to be well prepared once outside the school.

Let's take advantage of this. Let's see the whole child. Learning doesn't suddenly stop because the school day is over – extra-curricular activities is a good example. Society of today is changing ever faster and with it the needs and requirements of the up and coming generation. A truth of yesterday may not be so today. In a recent study students were asked; "What would you be interested in working with after studies?" 75% of the answers were jobs that hadn't even existed ten years ago. The school must try to adapt to this. To be able to cope with these changes and offer our children the best possible opportunities in life, the school management needs to be aware of this and adapt accordingly. Parents can be a great asset here – they have the up to date knowledge of society today.

European Hours - a (partially) wasted opportunity

Why do we have the EU Hours?

One of EU Schools objectives is «to encourage a European and global perspective overall» EU hours aim to trigger pupils' curiosity and develop their know-how on our mighty diversity and common heritage, facilitated by mix grouping. Since wherever EU Schools are, we have both an outstanding EU interest and know-how, the EU Hours have a rich, untapped potential to enhance our children's curiosity, richness and adeptness to a complex, multifaceted and multicultural environment.

Where are we now?

EU Hours have often come up as a sort of potluck where a plethora of ideas and crafting activities generated by teachers and the school management are poured into to be randomly attributed to groups of children. Undoubtedly, this framework has somewhat contributed to the creativity of our children (that's nice), but results linked to the objective were, in my perception, rather poor. The blame should not be put on a component of the system, be it the teachers, the managements, the institutions themselves or ourselves – the system simply did not work properly. In fact European Hours are the only subject (with Religion and Ethics) without a proper syllabus – highlighting the limit of an intergovernmental system that has actually little Community dimension in its governance.

The consequence is that the (huge) know-how we dispose did not permeate the schools – it would have been easy to tell interesting and challenging stories, to develop interest both in Europe, its history, values as well as its mighty diversity, or in interesting students on challenging scientific subjects through the interesting activities we are bringing about.

Yet, systems ought to draw lessons on their failures, and could take the initiative, since talking about subjects such as Research activities, Nature Protection, Sustainable Development, Aerospace projects could easily become a triggering factor to enhance interest in Europe as well as in most complex scientific subjects.

What could be (easily) done?

Europe already disposes of a set of Communication tools, notably in Brussels:

DG COMM has drafted series of schoolbooks associated to interactive websites (with a variety of games) on European subjects ranging from EU identity and diversities/ languages, rights – notably for children, the environment, highlight of past EU history, etc. These texts are available on paper and on-line: Europa.eu/kids-corner/index_en.htm, together with a comprehensive guidance for teachers: Europa.eu/teachers-corner/index_en.htm.

PARLAMENTARIUM (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/visiting/en/visits/parlamentarium.html>), the European Parliament's visitor centre, is further re-thinking and developing its services for young visitors. The structure is developing a fully-fledged pedagogic programme for the Parlamentarium, to look into all dimensions of visits for a young audience (organisation of visits, contents, preparation of visit and follow-up...). In the context of this work, a think tank has been set; European Schools are asked to contribute to the activity of the group and define new content to be supplied before the visit, to structure a module of EU hours, to plan a comprehensive and stimulating visit to the Parlamentarium.

FP7 (the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development) has supported many education-related EU-wide projects – among these Greenwave http://www.greenwave-europe.eu/index.php?p=site_selection: a EU-wide, web-based school networking project aiming at observing the onset of springtime spreading across Europe through some key natural indicators. The host structure in Brussels is ULB "Experimentarium" – an interesting scientific didactic centre that has occasionally cooperated with EEB2 their resource centre has been co-financed by the 7th Framework Programme: <http://www.experimentarium.be/>

EU SCHOOLNET, network of Schools and Ministries whose initiatives are co-financed by the Commission, proposed a variety of ideas and competition at European level (e.g.: You for Energy <http://u4energy.eu/web/guest/home>, financed by Intelligent Energy Europe programme). Sadly, EU Schools do not take part to this network.



Risk of 'dumbing down' the curriculum to save money

A working group of the Board of Governors is proposing a radical overhaul of the secondary curriculum, in order to lower the costs of the school system. Some measures make sense, but others will do real damage to the quality of education.

The Joint Teaching Committee working group proposed the following measures at its meeting of February 2013:

- Combining small classes across year groups in both L1 and L2 - so S1 and S2, or S3 and S4 could be taught together. This would mean 11 and 15 year olds sharing a class.
- Increasing the minimum class size to 11 - this would mean that many options would disappear for all sections - even for core subjects like Chemistry in German or Physics in Swedish.
- Eliminate advanced maths as a separate course - teach all pupils maths 3 together, with a further 2 hours maths available per week as an option. Advanced maths pupils will be held back to the speed of the slowest.
- Introduce combined sciences in S4 - pupils will no longer be able to study physics, chemistry and biology as separate subjects with specialist teachers. Likely to result in significant degradation on science teaching and learning.
- Integrated human science to continue in S4 (replacing compulsory tuition of History and Geography)

This is just a sample of some of the changes being discussed within the context of secondary reform.

The Board of Governors is currently split on how to proceed therefore this work has not been approved yet and further time has been allocated to the working group, which will now represent at the next Board of Governors meeting. Whilst we are not against change where it is rational and logical, we are against change which will damage the educational quality. Nor are we against all the proposals in the working paper; some we support, such as bringing greater rationality to Religion and Ethics teaching.

But the APEEE and teachers are deeply worried that these changes are being driven by a desire to cut costs in the short term, and will be very damaging to the longterm education quality of the European BAC if enacted as outlined in by the Working Group.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT HAS DECIDED TO LET BUSES RUN FOR ONE HOUR OF SCHOOL IN PRIMARY ON THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

The position of the parents association

Dear Parents,

You will have seen the information published on 13 May by the school on the last day of school [<http://www.eeb2.eu/site/>]. According to this information, nursery and primary pupils will have come to school in the morning, but buses will leave again already at 9.30.

In a period of crisis in our school, this is certainly not the most important problem we are facing. **However, APEEE wants to clarify the following points:**

- while APEEE is responsible for the bus transport, it is the school who decides at what time the buses are running
- APEEE has expressed its strong disagreement with this decision already in January and again in April 2013
- children will be in their classrooms for roughly 45 minutes, obviously too short a period for any teaching or useful occupation
- bus transport alone will cost around 12.000,00 €, money which could be much better spent on the schooling of the children
- CO2 emission will amount to 2800 kg CO2
- children will have to be picked up from the bus in the middle of the morning (around 10 o'clock) on a normal working day. APEEE expects that the school will offer another solution to parents who would have to take leave on that day, as, contrary to a «normal» holiday, the child cannot be enrolled in a stage.

The school management gave us the following reasons for its decision:

- all primary teachers want to attend the BAC ceremony and should be given the opportunity to do so
- nursery and primary teachers should be given the opportunity to properly say good bye to each other, which was not possible last year when buses left at 13.00

APEEE took the view that the BAC ceremony should take place on a Saturday, and Friday should be a normal day of school. If that is not possible, rather than passing 45 minutes in the classroom and spending 12.000,00 € for that, there should be no school at all on that day. It amounts to a manipulation of the statistics of the days of schooling if such a day is considered a «day of school». *Board APEEE Bxl II Woluwe*

POUR LE DERNIER JOUR DE L'ANNÉE SCOLAIRE, LA DIRECTION DE L'ÉCOLE A DÉCIDÉ DE NE FAIRE VENIR LES BUS DES ÉLÈVES DU PRIMAIRE QUE POUR UNE HEURE

Position de l'association des parents d'élèves

Chers parents d'élèves,

Comme vous l'avez vu, l'école a publié le 13 mai un communiqué relatif à la dernière journée de l'année scolaire [<http://www.eeb2.eu/site/fr/>]. Elle y fait savoir que les élèves de maternelle et de primaire devront venir à l'école ce matin-là mais qu'ils regagneront leur bus à 9 h 30.

Dans le contexte de crise actuel que connaît notre école, il ne s'agit assurément pas du problème le plus grave auquel nous devons faire face.

Cependant, l'APEEE souhaiterait apporter des éclaircissements sur les points suivants:

- l'APEEE assume la responsabilité du transport scolaire mais c'est l'école qui décide de l'heure à laquelle les bus doivent être en service
- l'APEEE avait exprimé son profond désaccord quant à cette décision, et ce à deux reprises, en janvier et en avril 2013
- les enfants ne gagneront leur classe que pour environ trois quarts d'heure, ce qui est manifestement trop court pour assurer une période d'enseignement ou leur donner une occupation utile
- le coût du transport en bus pour cette seule journée s'élèvera à environ 12 000 euros, somme qui pourrait être dépensée de manière bien plus utile pour l'éducation de nos enfants
- il en résultera un bilan carbone de 2800 kg de CO2
- c'est en milieu de matinée (vers 10 heures) d'une journée de travail ordinaire que les enfants devront être récupérés à leur descente de bus. .

L'APEEE attend de l'école qu'elle offre une solution de rechange qui permette aux parents de ne pas prendre de jours de congé à cette occasion car à la différence de ce qui passe un « jour de fermeture ordinaire de l'école », il ne sera pas possible d'inscrire les enfants à des stages.

À l'appui de sa décision, la direction de l'école a invoqué les motifs suivants:

- tous les enseignants du primaire souhaiteraient assister à la cérémonie du BAC et ils doivent pouvoir le faire
- les enseignants de maternelle et de primaire doivent disposer d'une occasion de se dire au revoir dans de bonnes conditions, ce qui n'aurait pas été le cas l'année dernière, alors que les élèves avaient regagné leur bus à 13h00.

Pour ce qui est de la cérémonie du BAC, la position de l'APEEE est qu'elle devrait se tenir un samedi, et que le vendredi doit correspondre à une journée scolaire ordinaire. Si cela n'est pas possible, il serait préférable d'annuler purement et simplement la journée d'école, plutôt que de gaspiller 12 000 euros pour ne permettre aux élèves que de passer trois quarts d'heure en classe. Dans la mesure où cette journée va être comptabilisée comme une journée d'école, cette décision de la direction constitue véritablement une manipulation de statistiques. *L'APEEE de Woluwé*

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

Swedish primary annual concert

As we all know, the Swedes love to sing, so every year the Swedish section in Primary holds a concert for all the children and parents. This year it was on Thursday 25 April. Each class selected their own songs, under the overall theme of 'transport'. Choices ranged from traditional Swedish ballads such as 'Så länge skutan kan gå' by Evert Taube to 'She's got a ticket to ride' by the Beatles.

All were delivered with such a wonderful gusto that the evening came truly alive. The audience were thrilled and the children excited and delighted. Musical accompaniment was provided by the excellent parent ensemble, 'Ivy's Angels', comprising Thomas Kallstenius on sax, Jean-Manuel Roubineau on guitar, Miguel Munoz on drums and Kirk Chilton on violin.

The grande finale was the unannounced and unexpected Creedance Clearwater Revival song 'Rollin on a river', punched out by the band in magnificent R&B style. On the sage, gyrating to the music like singers in a smokey nightclub from the 60s came the primary teachers, dressed up in wigs, sun glasses and appropriately swinging 60s black dresses. Everyone was taken back by the audacity and sheer fun of it, especially the pupils who had not seen their teachers in this light before.



What a fantastic event, everyone loved it. Events such as these reinforce the pleasure of being part of the school community. A very special thanks goes to Ivy Breton who put the whole event together and delivered such a wonderful spectacle, the primary teachers and children who gave such great performances and the parent band members who gave their time and talents.

Wish week in the canteen



For many pupils, the gas leak and school closure was a double tragedy because it also coincided with 'wish week'.

Wish week is the week each term when the pupils get to select the menu. It's an idea that one of the Swedish section teachers proposed; it is common practice in Sweden. The way it works is that the pupils get to select the dishes that will be served each day that week, from a list prepared by Paul Orlovski, the Chef.

It's a straight forward ballot, the highest scoring dishes create a shortlist from which Paul selects the meals for the week, making sure that the menu meets the necessary nutritional standards. Children love it, not just because they get to have their favourite food, but also because they get to have a say.

We are pleased to say that with some quick re-planning the canteen was able to reschedule wish week so that it could still go ahead. This term's dishes included carbonara pasta, fresh fruit salad, chili con carne & baked potatoes, home made pizza and cheeseburger.

Wish week is part of several initiatives the Canteen management and APEEE are undertaking to create more excitement and engagement for pupils around the school canteen.

According to Paul, little changes can make a big difference to how children appreciate the canteen, and the better they appreciate it, the more they will eat and the happier he and his team will be. One such small change that was very well received was the inclusion of easter eggs on the last day of term, which was a very welcome surprise, especially for the younger children.

EDITORIAL

Chers parents,

vous avez sous le yeux la newsletter de l'APEEE. Nous avons revu sa forme graphique et son contenu pour que vous vous soyez informés sur ce que qui se passe dans l'école de nos enfants de façon plus efficace et agréable et pour vous tenir au courant de ce que font pour vous les membres du CA de l'Association.

Les écoles européennes vivent un moment charnière de leur existence. La situation économique de certains états membres de l'Union et la crise économique imposent des contraintes budgétaires de plus en plus importantes, et des coupes discutables et contestées. Ces coupes interviennent, alors même qu'une éducation et une formation de qualité sont les seuls atouts pour soutenir la concurrence sur un monde du travail de plus en plus compétitive ainsi que la croissance en Europe.

Ce début d'année a été particulièrement dense de sujets, en particulier pour notre école. Nous avons eu la fuite de gaz, avec le débat que celle-ci a engendré sur la sécurité, la réforme du cycle secondaire, la décision du Royaume uni de ne plus détacher des enseignants, l'incapacité de l'école de fournir le nombre de jours de cours légal et l'impossibilité de récupérer des jours de cours.

Ceci a amené les membres du CA à coopérer de façon intensive, et occasionnellement à se confronter avec le management de l'école.

Ainsi, afin de vous rendre compte de façon simple et efficace de ces développements, chaque mois nous allons vous proposer des articles d'actualité, des dossiers en plus des rubriques que vous connaissez déjà.

Information on small ads and articles

You can now place small ads online via a dedicated mini-site: <http://www.woluweparents.org/classifieds/?lang=en>.

There are four main categories (Babysitting, Private tuition, Textbooks, and Workshops), each divided into sub-categories.

Ads are subject to moderation by the APEEE team and, once accepted, will be displayed for 1 month. This service is completely free of charge.

If you would like to write an article for WoluweInfo, or wish to have a letter published, please contact Anja Galle at secretariat.apee@woluweparents.org

APEEE Meetings April/May 2013

11-12 April	Interparents
11 April	Teaching & Learning working group
16-18 April	Board of Governors
16 April	Secondary Education Council
25 April	APEEE Board Meeting
26 April	Meeting with Headmasters
3 May	Meeting with Secretary General
6 May	Class reps meeting with Headmasters
13 May	Extra-curricular working group
15 May	Meeting Groupe de Suivi
16 May	Primary Education Council
16 May	APEEE Board Meeting